

24th & 25th June, 1931.

**UNION OF COUNTIES ASSOCIATIONS
FOR THE BLIND.**

**REPORT
OF
ANNUAL MEETING**

**OF THE
UNION OF COUNTIES ASSOCIATIONS
FOR THE BLIND,**

**HELD AT
CLOTHWORKERS' HALL, MINCING LANE,
LONDON, E.C.**

**ON
WEDNESDAY, 24th JUNE, 1931**

**AND
THURSDAY, 25th JUNE, 1931.**



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UNION OF COUNTIES ASSOCIATIONS FOR THE BLIND.

ANNUAL MEETING of the UNION OF
COUNTIES ASSOCIATIONS FOR THE BLIND, held
at Clothworkers' Hall, Mincing Lane, London, E.C., on
24th & 25th June, 1931.

PRESENT:—

Mr. P. M. EVANS (*Chairman*).

Northern Counties Association.

Councillor FLANAGAN.

Mr. W. H. TATE.

* Mr. J. H. MINES.

Councillor YORKE.

and Mrs. COWLEY (*Secretary*).

South Eastern and London Counties Association.

Mr. P. M. EVANS (*Chairman*).

Miss LLOYD.

* Dr. J. M. RITCHIE.

Mrs. MONTAGU BROWN.

Mr. H. J. WAGG.

and Miss Lyon (*Secretary*).

Midland Counties Association.

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| Miss MERIVALE (<i>Chairman</i>). | Mr. S. W. STARLING. |
| * Dr. HOLDEN. | Mr. THOMAS. |
| Mrs. KNAPP. | Mr. WILSON. |
| Mrs. BARTON LAND. | |
| and Miss URMSON (<i>Hon. Secretary</i>). | |

North Western Counties Association.

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| Mr. F. J. BELL | Mrs. C. MACFIE. |
| Miss L. O. BURGESS. | Miss A. SMALE. |
| * Mr. NORMAN JONES. | |
| and Miss I. V. BURGESS (<i>Secretary</i>). | |

Western Counties Association.

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| Rev. H. EVERY. | Mrs. PAGE. |
| Miss BARKER. | Mrs. PRYCE-MICHELL. |
| Miss CASTLEMAN-SMITH. | Miss WATERS. |
| and Miss KING (<i>Hon. Organising Secretary</i>). | |

Eastern Counties Association.

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| Rev. Canon BOLAM. | Mr. E. EVANS. |
| Miss CUNINGHAME. | Mr. A. K. TURNER. |
| and Miss TENNEY (<i>Organizing Secretary</i>). | |

Co-opted Members.

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| Mr. DIXON. | * Miss D. L. JONES. |
| Dr. EICHHOLZ. | * Miss O. PRINCE. |

Attending on the Invitation of the Chairman, with the approval of the Union.

Mr. BENNETT (*Ministry of Health*).

* Miss BRAMHALL (*Ministry of Health*).

* Mr. F. R. LOVETT (*Ministry of Health*).

* Dr. UNDERWOOD (*Board of Education*).

Miss CRACKNALL (*Secretary*), and

Miss Wood (*Assistant Secretary*).

NOTE: * Not present on Wednesday afternoon.

Election of Chairman.

Before the election of a Chairman took place Canon Bolam (Eastern Counties) was asked temporarily to take the Chair. He then put to the meeting its first duty, to elect a Chairman for the current year.

On the proposal of Mr. Tate (Northern Counties), seconded by Dr. Eichholz, it was unanimously resolved:

That Mr. Evans be re-elected Chairman.

Mr. EVANS, having taken the Chair, expressed his thanks for the honour done him and his gratitude for the help he had received in the past. He realised, however, that the business of the Union was rapidly increasing; new ideas and new methods were coming into operation, and before very long it would be necessary to have someone who had the advantages of youth and greater energy. He hoped that in the coming year the Union would accomplish both useful and valuable work.

The CHAIRMAN referred to the indisposition of Sir Beachcroft Towse during the inauguration of the Museum at the National Institute for the Blind that morning and was glad to be able to report that he was very much better.

Minutes.

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 20th November 1930, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read, and signed as correct by the Chairman.

Absentees.

Messages of regret for absence were received from Mr. Bateman, Councillor Clydesdale, Rev. Dr. Fitzpatrick, Miss Griffith, Dr. Holden (for that afternoon), Mr. Mowatt, Dr. Ritchie, Mr. Siddall, Mr. S. E. Stevens and Mr. Whitehead. Alderman Kathleen Chambers, Major Bryant, Mr. R. C. Fanthorpe, Mr. Heaton, Mr. W. F. Marchant and Mr. C. W. Stevens were also absent.

Election of Hon. Treasurer.

On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by Mr. Wagg (South Eastern and London Counties), it was resolved :—

That Mr. Mowatt be re-elected Hon. Treasurer.

Election of Council.

The CHAIRMAN reported that the South Wales and Monmouthshire Counties Association had withdrawn from the Union. He thought this was unfortunate, particularly at the present time, and suggested that he should write on behalf of the Union and ask the Association to reconsider its decision.

Miss TENNEY (Eastern Counties) asked whether the Association could be asked to give its reason for withdrawing.

Mr. EVERY (Western Counties) thought that, whatever the reason might be, there was a stronger reason for remaining within the Union and stressed the desirability of urging upon the Association the importance of so doing.

Dr. EICHHOLZ believed that the personal intervention of an important representative of the Union, preferably the Chairman, might be useful.

The CHAIRMAN said he would be willing to do this. It was finally agreed that he should write to the Chairman of the Association and reiterate the regret of the Union at the decision of his Association, suggesting at the same time that he would be glad of an opportunity to talk the matter over.

The following members were nominated by the Counties Associations as their representatives on the Council:—

Northern Counties:

Alderman Kathleen Chambers,
 Councillor J. A. Clydesdale,
 Councillor J. W. Flanagan,
 Mr. S. E. Stevens,
 Mr. W. Whitehead,
 Councillor W. E. Yorke,
 and, *ex-officio*,
 Mr. Siddall (Chairman),
 Mrs. Cowley (Secretary).

South Eastern and London Counties :

Mrs. Montagu Brown,
Miss Lloyd,
Mr. Heaton,
Mr. W. F. Marchant,
Dr. J. M. Ritchie,
Mr. H. J. Wagg,
and, *ex-officio*,
Mr. P. M. Evans (Chairman),
Miss Lyon (Secretary).

Midland Counties :

Mrs. Barton Land,
Dr. Holden,
Mrs. Knapp,
Mr. Starling,
Mr. Thomas,
Mr. Wilson,
and, *ex-officio*,
Miss Merivale (Chairman),
Miss Urmson (Hon. Secretary).

North Western Counties :

Mr. F. J. Bell,
Miss L. O. Burges,
Mrs. C. W. Macfie,
Miss B. Griffith,
Mr. Norman Jones,
Miss Smale,
and, *ex-officio*,
Mr. W. Bateman (Chairman),
Miss I. V. Burges (Secretary).

South Wales and Monmouthshire Counties :

(No nominations owing to withdrawal.)

Western Counties :

Miss Barker,
 Miss Castleman-Smith,
 Mrs. Page,
 Mrs. Pryce-Michell.
 Mr. C. W. Stevens,
 Miss Waters,
 and, *ex-officio*,
 Rev. H. Every (Vice-Chairman),
 Miss King (Hon. Secretary).

Eastern Counties :

Rev. Canon Bolam,
 Major T. H. Bryant,
 Mr. E. Evans,
 Mr. R. C. Fanthorpe,
 Mrs. Nussey,
 Mr. A. K. Turner,
 and, *ex-officio*,
 Rev. Dr. T. C. Fitzpatrick (Chairman),
 Miss Tenney (Secretary).

Co-opted Members.

On the proposal of Canon Bolam, seconded by Miss Lyon (South Eastern & London Counties) it was unanimously resolved that the following be re-elected as co-opted members: Mr. Dixon, Miss D. L. Jones and Miss O. Prince.

The CHAIRMAN referred to the decision of the last meeting to invite the National Institute for the Blind to nominate a representative as a co-opted member of the Union. He had much pleasure in informing the

meeting that the National Institute had nominated Dr. Eichholz. He therefore moved that Dr. Eichholz be appointed a co-opted member and the proposal, which was seconded by Miss Castleman-Smith (Western Counties) was carried unanimously.

DR. EICHHOLZ acknowledged his election and said that for a good many years, by the courtesy of the Chairman, he had had the privilege of attending meetings of the Union, and was glad he would continue to do so in his new capacity.

The CHAIRMAN said that after this meeting they would be losing the very valuable services of Mr. Tate owing to the change in representation from the Northern Counties Association. He could not imagine a meeting of the Union being complete without Mr. Tate. A certain amount of notice was necessary before co-option, and he hoped to propose at the next meeting of the Council that Mr. Tate be elected a co-opted member.

MR. TATE (Northern Counties) said that there were advantages in a change of personnel, especially when some members have been so long on the stage as he had. He thanked the Chairman for his kind proposal and would be happy to give any service he could.

Election of the Executive Committee.

The following members were elected to the Executive Committee:—

Northern Counties:

Mr. Siddall,
Mrs. Cowley.

South Eastern and

London Counties:

(To be appointed).

Midland Counties :	Miss Merivale, Miss Urmson.
North Western Counties :	Miss L. O. Burges, Miss I. V. Burges.
South Wales & Mon. Counties :	(No nominations owing to withdrawal).
Western Counties :	Rev. H. Every, Miss King.
Eastern Counties :	Rev. Canon Bolam, Miss Tenney.

Alteration in wording of the Constitution (Clause 4 (b))

The CHAIRMAN reported that the Executive Committee had considered the amendment of Clause 4 (b), as the practice of sending a Vice-Chairman in place of the Chairman required to be regularised if it were to continue, and accordingly a recommendation was sent forward to the Council that Clause 4 (b) should be amended so as to read :

“ The affairs of the Union shall be conducted by a Council in part ex-officio, and in part representative. The ex-officio members shall consist of :

“ The Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Hon. Treasurer, and the Chairman or Vice-Chairman and General Secretary of each of the seven Counties Associations.”

A short discussion followed and it was finally decided to insert the additional words required. The Notice of Motion necessary to effect this amendment will be given for the next meeting.

Councillor FLANAGAN (Northern Counties) suggested that in the event of South Wales adhering to its decision the word "constituent" be substituted for the word "seven" throughout the Constitution.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the withdrawal of the South Wales and Monmouthshire Counties Association would necessitate an amendment of a number of paragraphs in the Constitution, and suggested that he might look through it and report to the next meeting what would be required to bring it up to date. At the same time any other points which were not quite clear could be dealt with.

Statement of Accounts.

A statement of accounts for the year 1930-31 was presented to the meeting and adopted nem. con.

Adoption of Annual Report.

The CHAIRMAN asked the Secretary to explain the form which the Executive Committee recommended that the Annual Report should take this year. An outline of what it was hoped to embody in the Annual Report had been circulated with the Agenda of the present meeting.

Dr. EICHHOLZ (National Institute for the Blind) expressed regret that the Report would no longer be in the same form as hitherto. In his opinion the collected reports of the various Associations stood as the embodiment of the voluntary work done for the blind in England and Wales.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Executive Committee strongly recommended that the Annual Report should contain summaries of the Reports of the constituent Associations, and that the new form of Annual Report should be given a trial.

Mrs. COWLEY (Northern Counties) drew attention to the fact that a notice would appear in the Annual Report of the Union to the effect that copies of the full Reports of the Counties Associations could be obtained from the Secretaries. These could be collected and kept in a folder.

Miss URMSON (Midland Counties) said that the Midland Counties Association was having a few copies bound for the use of Local Secretaries, and she thought that it would probably be possible to arrange to have a few more done for those who wished to have a bound volume.

Mr. TATE said that the Executive Committee had given careful and exhaustive consideration to the form of the Annual Report this year. The great objection to the old volume was that though it was valuable to individuals here and there it was not properly digested by even those individuals. There was a strong feeling that the work of the Union might be more clearly indicated by the new form. Statistics from each of the Constituent Associations, together with a table of total statistics for the whole country, would be embodied in the Annual Report and would provide valuable data for comparison.

With regard to page 4 of the Annual Report, Mrs. COWLEY suggested that the first paragraph might be amended to read as follows:—

“During the year steps have been taken, by agreement with the British Wireless for the Blind Fund, to form a North Regional Wireless for the Blind Committee, which is to be a development from the Manchester Station Wireless for the Blind Fund. This Committee has applied for registration for the purpose of dealing with the installation and maintenance of the sets supplied by the Fund in the area of the Northern Counties Association, which Association has representation on that Committee.”

This was agreed to.

On the suggestion of Mr. WAGG it was further agreed to delete the first five words of the second paragraph under the heading “Directory of Agencies,” as not being relevant.

The Secretary explained that the Prevention of Blindness Committee wished to amend the last paragraph of its Report, so as to read as follows:—

“It has been agreed that written reports on the work done by the Secretary should be circulated to the Committee from time to time. In order to build up information by means of which conclusions can be drawn these written reports will include the result of enquiry into:—

prevention of blindness in pre-school children, including the treatment of Ophthalmia Neonatorum;

preventive treatment of school children;

post-school work, including the work of ophthalmic hospitals and ophthalmic departments, and industrial blindness and methods of prevention.”

This amendment was approved by the meeting.

British Wireless for the Blind Fund.

The CHAIRMAN read the Report drawn up by the three representatives of the Union on the British Wireless for the Blind Fund, as follows:—

“ Total of the Fund, £32,084.

“ Number of sets distributed:—

“ Crystal sets	7,637
“ One-valve sets	4,407
“ Two-valve sets	593
“ Two-valve sets with loud speakers	19
“ Stronger sets	200
“ Relays	114
	<hr/>
	12,970
	<hr/>

“ All meetings of the Committee of the Fund have been attended by your three representatives, and by the Secretary who is present by the courtesy of the Committee, and they hope they have been able to assist the Fund in its none too easy task.

“ A North Regional Wireless for the Blind Committee is in course of being registered for the purpose of dealing with the installation, maintenance, etc., of the sets supplied by the Fund in the area of the Northern Counties Association. The Association is represented on that Committee.

“ The Fund can now supply high tension and low tension batteries and valves as spare parts on payment at 50 per cent. discount.

“ The Committee of the Fund has arranged that a dinner shall take place at Clothworkers' Hall, at which His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales has consented

to make a broadcast appeal in the hope of raising the balance of the money needed to carry out the main object of the Fund.

“ The Committee of the Fund is once more indebted to the B.B.C. and to the Clothworkers’ Company for their generous help which has made this effort possible.

“ The blind derive great satisfaction from their wireless sets and this justifies all the money spent by the Fund and all the work done by the local agencies in bringing the sets to the blind.

“(Signed) ETHEL RAWDEN.

“ BARBARA URMSON.

“ V. D. A. LYON.”

Miss KING (Western Counties) pointed out that the only strong sets that had come to the Western Counties were the 200 sets which were a free gift by Mr. Schroder, and asked whether these were included in the number given of three-valve sets distributed by the Fund.

Miss LYON and Miss URMSON did not think the 200 sets given by Mr. Schroder were included in the figures given. It was decided that Miss Lyon or Miss Urmson should make enquiries and ascertain the facts.*

The CHAIRMAN then asked Miss Lyon to give the meeting the latest figures in connection with the Fund. Miss Lyon stated that the total of the Fund to date was £36,535, and the total result of the Dinner, comprising the actual collection at that function and the result of the broadcast appeal made by the Prince of Wales, was £4,950.

* It has subsequently been ascertained that the 200 Schroder sets were included in the figures.

Association of Workshops.

Mr. STARLING (Midland Counties) made a short report on the work of the Association during the past year. He was glad to record an increase in the membership of the Association by the addition of seven Workshops and Home Workers Schemes, which had been admitted during the year, making a total membership of 56 Workshops or Home Workers Schemes.

During the year the Association had reviewed the question of rates of wages paid to workshop employees. It had been agreed that Trades Union or Trade Board rates of wages should be paid where such exist. With regard to occupations for which there are no official rates, the Association was preparing a list of rates for the approval of its Members.

The question of the amount of augmentation to be paid to Home Workers had also received the attention of the Association, who report that no case can be found for paying Home Workers a lower rate than that paid to Workshop Employees. As, however, Local Authorities are not likely to approve a big increase in Home Workers' augmentation immediately, it has been recommended as a tentative measure that a minimum of 10s. augmentation per week be paid to all approved Home Workers.

On the question of Marketing, Salesmanship and Advertising, Mr. Starling said that there was nothing definite to report as the whole matter had been referred back to the Regional Sub-Committees for further consideration. He hoped he would be in a position to report something definite at a subsequent meeting.

Councillor FLANAGAN said he thought it might be of interest to the delegates to know that £1 a week augmentation had already been recognised by some Authorities, e.g. West Riding, Bradford City Council and Leeds.

Mr. TATE said that the recognition of employment of Home Workers is now wider. In the old days under the Ministry of Health Home Workers had to confine themselves to occupations followed in workshops. The West Riding for instance, now recognised hawkers and newsvendors as Home Workers. If Local Authorities could be persuaded to take in such hitherto unrecognised occupations and if the necessary supervision and service could be rendered a great step forward would have been taken.

The Macgregor Prize.

The CHAIRMAN reported that he had received a letter from Mr. S. E. Stevens, Hon. Secretary to the Board of Examiners of the College of Teachers, stating that there had been only two entrants for the Macgregor Prize this year and that neither had reached the required standard. The Chairman said that he had since received a letter from Dr. Ritchie on behalf of the Executive Committee of the College of Teachers, stating that for some time past the Executive Committee of the College had felt that a change should be made in the character of the test. The present examination is in the teaching of Braille and Moon. Excellent work had been done in this direction but the amount of originality which can be shewn in the working out of such schemes is limited and the Executive feels that the time for a change has now arrived. Another disadvantage of the present test is that, although theoretically open, it is in practice confined to candidates who are sitting for

the Home Teachers Examination. It would be of advantage if this limitation were removed. The Executive of the College was of opinion that the test might be varied from year to year, and asked the Union to consider the following recommendation for 1932:—

“That the Macgregor Prize be offered for the best Essay not exceeding 5,000 words in length on some line of original research in the field of Home Teachers Work.”

Dr. Ritchie added that Mr. Macgregor was in full agreement with the course suggested.

Mr. E. EVANS (Eastern Counties) added his endorsement of the suggestion and hoped that the Council would adopt the recommendation.

On the proposal of Mr. Tate, seconded by Mrs. Page (Western Counties) the recommendation was approved.

Appointment of Two Representatives of the Union on the Council of the National Institute for the Blind.

The CHAIRMAN read a letter which had been received from the National Institute for the Blind asking for the nomination of two representatives to serve on its re-constituted Executive Council, as follows:—

COPY.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND.

224-6-8, Great Portland Street,

London, W.1.

23rd March, 1931.

The Secretary,

The Union of Counties Associations for the Blind,

66, Victoria Street,

London, S.W.1.

Dear Madam,

The Executive Council of the National Institute has been giving very careful consideration to the possibility of reconstituting itself on elective and representative lines, and we are happy to

inform you that it has decided to give voluntary agencies and organisations for the Blind throughout the country a predominant voice in the management of the Institute's affairs. We enclose a copy of the new constitution which the Council has now adopted. You will see that under it you are invited to elect two representatives to the Council, and we hope that your Committee will at an early date proceed to the election of such representatives in order that the new Council may be fully constituted at the time of the Annual Meeting of the National Institute for the Blind in July.

You will observe that the representative members of the Council will in future be directly elected by their own organisations, the Council having taken the further step in this direction of waiving the rule, which has hitherto debarred from its membership any salaried officials of registered Voluntary Agencies for the Blind, in respect of two of the electing Bodies, namely, the College of Teachers and the Association of Workshops for the Blind. You will also observe that care has been taken to ensure the membership of a substantial proportion of Blind persons.

We have no doubt that you will recognise that a body with the responsibilities and duties of the N.I.B. must enjoy the services of an adequate number of Councillors who are primarily concerned with national rather than local work, and, that the maintenance of a certain proportion of such persons, as provided for by Group D in the new constitution, is fully consistent with the Council's desire to adopt wholeheartedly the elective and representative principle.

We believe fervently in the voluntary system in connection with work for the Blind, and, having regard to the excellent services which it has rendered to the Blind in the past, we are anxious to see it still further strengthened and consolidated so as to be in a position to satisfy all future needs. We hope that the new constitution of the Council will bring strength to our cause and we look forward to hearing that you welcome our Council's attitude and that we may count on your wholehearted co-operation.

We are, Madam,

Your obedient servants,

E. P. B. TOWSE, *Chairman.*

P. M. EVANS, *Vice-Chairman.*

COPY.

C.S.207, A.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND.
 CONSTITUTION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

The Executive Council shall consist of five groups of persons as follows :—

Group A. Persons elected by the Counties Associations for the Blind.

Each Counties Association to elect one representative except the Metropolitan and Adjacent Counties and the Northern Counties which shall each have two representatives in view of the large blind population of their areas9

Group B. Persons elected by the following Bodies :—

National Library for the Blind	2
St. Dunstan's.....	1
Union of Associations	2
College of Teachers of the Blind	2
Association of Workshops for the Blind.....	2
Gardner's Trust for the Blind	1
The Clothworkers' Company	1
Organisations of the Blind	6
—	17

Group C. Persons elected by Local Government Associations :—

County Councils Association	3
Association of Municipal Corporations	3
Association of Education Committees	1
Association of Directors of Education	1
—	8

Group D.

National Members, being persons interested in national work for the blind, to be elected as vacancies occur by the remaining members of the Group. So far as is reasonably possible not less than one-third shall be blind24

Group E.

Persons co-opted by the Executive Council as constituted above, being members of governing bodies of (i) Workshops or Institutions for the Blind or (ii) other Voluntary Organisations concerned with the Welfare of the Blind4

Total Membership62

The following rules shall govern the election of members of the Executive Council :—

(1) That pending any alteration of relevant Articles of Association, the Executive Council bind itself to appoint to the Executive Council the members elected in accordance with the above schedule on the sole condition that persons so elected shall have become members of the Institute prior to their appointment as members of the Executive Council.

(2) That in the event of a Member of the Executive Council vacating office, the Executive Council similarly bind itself to fill such casual vacancy in accordance with Article 29 of the Articles of Association by appointing the person elected by the Body by whom the retiring member was formerly elected.

(3) That should any of the bodies in Groups A, B and C or Group D, fail to fill any vacancy within six months, such vacancy shall be filled by the Executive Council.

(4) That in order to secure continuity in the work of the reconstituted Council, the Executive Council bind itself to re-elect at its Annual Meeting in 1932 those Members of the Executive Council who in pursuance of Article 26 of the Articles of Association retire by rotation, and that the members to retire at the Annual Meeting in 1933 and 1934 be selected by ballot from the whole membership of the Executive Council.

(5) That the present rule that no salaried official of an Institution, Workshop or Society for the Blind be elected to the Council be waived in the case of the College of Teachers of the Blind and the Association of Workshops for the Blind in respect of either or both of their representatives.

(6) That the six persons elected by Organisations of the Blind under Group B shall themselves be blind.

The CHAIRMAN asked leave to place before the meeting the suggestion that the names of Mrs. Knapp, Vice-Chairman of the Midland Counties Association and Mr. Every, Vice-Chairman of the Western Counties Association, be considered for nomination and asked for further names. No further names being submitted, Miss Merivale (Midland Counties) seconded Mrs. Knapp's nomination and Mrs. Pryce-Michell (Western Counties) that of Mr. Every. These nominations, on being put to the meeting, were adopted.

White Sticks for the Blind.

A discussion on this subject was inaugurated by Mr. Tate and continued on the following morning. A report of the discussion will be found on page 40.

The Meeting was resumed at 11 a.m. on Thursday, 25th June.

The CHAIRMAN was sorry to report that he had received a telegram from Mr. Siddall saying he had had a slight accident and expressing regret at his inability to be present.

The Problem of Provision for the Partially Blind.

Mrs. BARTON LAND (Midland Counties) read the following paper on the problem of the partially blind:—

I feel it is an honour to the County I represent to have been asked to open to-day this important discussion on "The Problem of provision for the partially blind."

Some time ago my Committee discussed this matter with reference to a specific case. The opinion was then expressed that it was a matter of national importance, and that, sooner or later, the Board of Education and the Ministry of Health must be approached and asked to formulate some scheme or schemes for dealing with this problem which is causing so much anxiety to all who are interested in the welfare of the blind, and in this category I include the partially blind.

It seems fitting that a body such as the Union of Counties Associations, with its wide knowledge, should discuss the matter and offer suggestions which it is hoped the Board of Education and the Ministry of Health may investigate, and that they may ultimately publish some proposals for dealing with the problem. It is one of importance both from the point of view of the layman and also from the medical side and only expert investigation by all concerned can bring about the solution we all so ardently desire.

We all realise that the problem is of a two-fold nature; it presents itself in the cases of children discharged from Schools for the Blind at the age of sixteen and uncertifiable as industrially blind, and in the case of people of maturer age, whose sight has so much improved that they are no longer "blind within the meaning of the Act" and de-certification takes place.

Let me deal in the first place with the former category. I am quite sure that all will agree there is something radically wrong here. The receipt from the Head of an Institution of a notification that some particular case cannot be certified as "industrially blind" and therefore cannot proceed to training, arouses mixed feelings. Instead of experiencing extreme thankfulness that eyesight has been preserved we are depressed. We know that this boy or girl, in whom we take a keen personal interest has to face the future with but little, if any, equipment to enable him or her to take his or her place in the sighted industrial world. We had hoped that under our care a future holding some prospect of employment and consequent useful citizenship was in store. The notification is usually accompanied by a letter in which a request is made that

the Association will do all in its power to help even though the boy or girl is not blind. Needless to say every effort is made. Sometimes the result is good and we are able through our Home Teachers to find suitable employment but, sad to say, far more often we are helpless in this respect. All we can do is to visit, invite these boys and girls to our Social Centres and do our best to brighten their lives.

It is one of the saddest things I have experienced to witness these children, who have had a happy school life, suddenly bereft of their companions, their school and all it represents, and unexpectedly thrust out with very little hope for the future. Is it any wonder that in the majority of cases they deteriorate both mentally and morally? Further, though this is a small matter compared to the effect on the child, has that public money necessary for the years in the Institution for the Blind been wisely spent? Would it not have been spent to better advantage on some other method of preserving sight.

There is no doubt that we are passing through a phase during which more of these cases are coming through our hands than will be the case in the future. Fewer children are now being sent to Schools for the Blind due probably to the wide difference between the definitions "educationally blind" and "industrially blind."

It seems to me that a very real danger exists here. Are we depriving these children of special treatment, namely, education in a School which has sight-saving methods in operation, with a consequent risk of blindness in later life?

We all know that little or no provision is available in the ordinary elementary school or in a secondary school for the child who has bad sight.

It is true, as far as experience in my own County teaches me, that Ophthalmic Surgeons do not lightly send children to Institutions for the Blind without due care and without thorough appreciation of the trouble that must follow should they prove not certifiable as industrially blind at the age of sixteen. If this care is universally applied, it follows that the intensity of the problem is minimised, but it is also equally certain that unforeseen improvement in those admitted may still provide such cases. Our own County Ophthalmic Surgeon, who is daily treating cases referred to him by the School Medical Inspectors, in cases of very bad sight not certifiable often gives instructions to the Head Teachers as to the methods he would like adopted in order to preserve the sight, for example, the use of small blackboards and chalk for writing, a time-limit for subjects necessitating eye-strain, position in the class, and so on.

Would it be possible to collect such cases in a special class in an ordinary sighted school under a teacher who is one of the ordinary members of the school staff and has had a special short course of training in sight-saving methods? Segregation must at all costs be avoided and the child allowed to take its part in the normal activities of the school and to take its place for oral lessons in the ordinary class with children of like mental age. In the special class the child would be taught to read and write and have a great deal of manual work by sight-saving methods. This scheme might be possible at once in congested areas where there are many schools which could feed the special class.

In scattered county areas the solution is far more difficult. When the reorganisation schemes in those areas come into being it might be possible to have such a class attached to a Central School. When such children eventually leave the sighted school they would be able to take some position in industry, and there are positions for which keen eyesight is not essential.

In the case of children sent to schools for the blind it is necessary that we banish from our minds the idea that it must inevitably follow that the child is to remain until the age of sixteen. Frequent examination during its life in the Institution is imperative. I would suggest that the child should be examined and reported upon by an Ophthalmic Surgeon at least twice a year and that such reports should be submitted to the Medical Department of the Local Education Authority responsible for its maintenance. I stress the words Medical Department. Such report, if improvement is discovered, should express an opinion as to whether the child should remain in the Institution or be returned to a normal sighted school. It is neither good policy nor just to the child that the examination should be delayed until its sixteenth year.

If such methods as I have outlined were adopted, it follows that the number of children leaving the Institutions at sixteen not certifiable as industrially blind would be small.

Yet the problem remains, what is to be done? Incapable through bad sight to obtain employment, often handicapped from the fact that they have been educated in a school for the blind, are these young people to be allowed to swell the numbers of the unemployed and the unemployable in the sighted world?

Since Local Authorities are empowered to assist in the prevention of blindness it seems possible and feasible for the Board of Education and the Ministry of Health in conjunction with the Local Authorities to provide vocational training for these border-line cases not industrially blind.

If such a scheme could be brought into operation, we should all have the satisfaction of knowing that at last something was being done to help those sad cases to live a happier, freer and more self-respecting life than at the moment is possible.

Let us now consider an equally pressing problem—that of provision for those people, considerably older, who are de-certified as blind. Some of these may be in receipt of the State Pension and other benefits; they may even be employed in Workshops or in Home Workers Schemes, and consequently very great hardship results through de-certification.

We have often been told in this room and elsewhere to watch our cases, “to comb our register.” We are none of us anxious to make a person “blind” but it requires a strong sense of duty to carry into effect the work of de-certification. It is easy to talk about it and to say that this must be done so long as one has no particular case in mind, but when it is a question of some person whom one knows and respects it is a very different proposition. It has been my unpleasant duty quite recently to take the necessary steps to have a man de-certified. He was in receipt of a State Pension, a grant from my Association, had a Wireless set and enjoyed a free ‘bus pass, not to mention all the social life to which his blindness entitled him. This man’s

sight had improved so much that it was obvious that his name should be removed from the Register. At the same time, his sight remains so bad that it will be impossible for him to renew the sighted employment for which he was previously capable.

Another case faces me in the near future. A man of fifty had cataract and was quite blind. It was known that after the necessary operations sight would, in the natural order of things, be restored. The Ophthalmic Surgeon was willing to certify if the man was given to understand that when his sight returned he would be de-certified. These facts were placed before the Pensions Committee and the State Pension was granted. He also has a grant and other amenities as in the former case.

I am aware that in some areas a case such as this would not be registered; it would be merely watched and no financial assistance given because it would be realised that after operation the sight would return. I can only say that without the assistance of an organisation such as our own, which enables the man to travel regularly to hospital and have the necessary treatment, he would have been blind for life. He is not able to afford the journeys and too proud to apply to the Public Assistance Committee. In the present economic situation the finding of possible avenues of employment for such people is an impossible task.

It would be unwise that such people should participate in benefits especially intended for blind persons, and yet surely some provision should be made for them? I am leaving this Conference to offer suggestions as to how this should be accomplished.

I have endeavoured, quite briefly and without embellishment, to state the problem of the "partially blind" as it appears to me. I am hopeful that my remarks may be amplified and suggestions for solution made during the debate that is to follow. May I, in conclusion, emphasise the urgency of the matter and express the hope that no unnecessary delay may hinder the carrying out of any policy that this Conference may think fit to adopt.

Mr. STARLING said he was sure that everyone present had listened with great interest to what Mrs. Barton Land had said on this very difficult problem. It was a problem which had been before them for many years and a great deal of thought had been given to it by those who have to deal with partially blind children de-certified before or at the age of sixteen.

With regard to the cases being taught in ordinary schools, this is a matter which should receive most careful consideration. He referred to what was being done in the Sight Conservation Schools in America and thought that something might be achieved by applying those methods here. The suggestion that ophthalmic surgeons should make frequent examinations was a good one and was being carried out in one school he knew, the examination taking place once a year.

If partially blind children are trained in a blind school, there is always the difficulty of finding jobs, because the sighted employer is prejudiced against employing a boy or girl in an ordinary occupation who had been trained in a blind school. If they were to be trained vocationally, these special classes should be outside the ordinary school.

Mr. STARLING gave the following statistics applying to his Institution: the number of cases de-certified during the last eight years was 40, an average of five per year. Of these sixteen are employed, seven cannot be traced, six have since been certified blind, ten are unemployed and one is deceased. With regard to those who are employed, it was only fair to say that four of them are employed by an Institution, otherwise they would probably not have jobs at all. The occupations varied: there are market gardeners, labourers, piano tuners, button makers, porters and one errand boy, and some of the girls are in domestic service. These figures showed what had been done in a certain area and may help those who are interested in the matter in anything that may follow.

Mr. DIXSON agreed with the previous speakers that the education of the partially blind should be in classes within the ordinary schools and not in schools for the blind.

Mrs. BARTON LAND was strongly of opinion that the partially blind should be educated in a normal sighted school. It had been suggested by one teacher that the children should receive oral teaching in the classes to which their age entitled them and that at some time during the day, irrespective of age, they could be taught together in a special class. The segregation of such children must be avoided at all costs.

Partially sighted girls were mostly employed in domestic work and it might be possible to train them more intensively for such work, which would help to solve two problems at once.

The CHAIRMAN called the attention of the Meeting to the discussion on the question of the partially blind which took place at the meeting of the Union on the 24th November, 1927. Dr. Eichholz, speaking then, referred to two schemes which were in operation, one at the Swansea and South Wales Institution and one at the Royal School for the Blind, Leatherhead. It would be interesting to know how those schemes were working.

Miss KING asked if there were any means of solving the problem of children in scattered rural areas. Where the children are many miles apart it is sometimes impossible for them to be collected.

Mrs. BARTON LAND thought that the only solution would be the organisation of schools. In Staffordshire, for example, the scattered areas were being reorganised. The central schools will be in all the towns and the children in the scattered areas collected daily by 'buses. Within two years it is hoped that this arrangement will be universal throughout the county. There was a real danger in the children being allowed to remain as at present: a number were not at school at all owing to the fear that if they were sent to a blind school they might not be certified as blind at sixteen, and they could not attend an ordinary school or they would certainly become blind.

Mr. E. EVANS did not think the problem was quite so simple as it might appear. He had had some experience of partially blind classes when he was a master under the London County Council, and had found that when there was a special class for partially blind children attached to a big school, the partially

blind were not, and never did become, part of the big school in spirit. The children were separated and divided up, taken into the partially blind class, brought back, and all day there was a constant coming and going and they became a nuisance to the ordinary teacher who never accepted them as part of his work.

The Gorleston School for the Blind had had a certain amount of success in training partially blind girls for domestic service. There was a bungalow where the girls learnt domestic science in conditions similar to those in which they would work later on.

Mrs. BARTON LAND explained that she had stressed the point that a teacher of the partially blind in an ordinary school should be specially trained for the work and would therefore take an interest in it.

Mr. LOVETT (Ministry of Health) thought that the discussion was confused through talking about two things at once—the partially blind as a problem generally and whether the partially blind should be trained in an ordinary school or not.

There are one or two things that can be done for the partially blind. They can be provided with elementary education just as any other citizen and the Education Act 1921 empowers the Local Education Authority to give them higher education including vocational training. A number of Authorities provide them with vocational training and the stimulation of other Authorities to make special provision for these children might be achieved by the pressure of public opinion.

With regard to the question whether partially blind children should be sent to special schools or not, Mr. Lovett referred to the system adopted at Cleveland,

Ohio. There both the blind and partially blind children of normal mentality were educated at the public elementary schools. The partially blind spent part of their time in their own classes, called Sight Saving or Sight Conservation Classes, with special teachers, but, apart from that, they are ordinary pupils competing in examinations with the rest of the school. A careful psychological test is made before the child is put in these schools, so that if definitely below the average in intelligence, the child is sent to a special school.

Dr. UNDERWOOD (Board of Education) agreed as to the need for investigating the education of the partially blind in ordinary schools. The difficulties were very real ones but he thought that in this country it had been proved—in America it had certainly been proved—that these difficulties could be overcome. But they could only be overcome by the very closest co-operation between the teacher of the special class and the ordinary class teacher. There were, of course, practical difficulties in arranging special classes for partially blind children in country districts, but in one city in our country there was a system corresponding to that employed at Cleveland. There were three or four partially sighted classes in the ordinary public elementary schools. The children attend these special classes for such subjects as handwork, writing, reading and physical training and music; they attend the ordinary classes for all oral subjects—mental arithmetic, geography, history, literature, etc. The scheme in America for the education in the ordinary schools of the partially blind was first developed in Cleveland and is now carried out in a number of cities, e.g. Chicago, Boston, New York, Detroit, and is practically the same as the system referred to above.

With reference to the employment of the partially blind, Dr. Underwood gave some interesting details of the work at Cleveland. The children in the partially blind classes come first of all under the observation of a psychologist. After leaving school they come under a vocational guidance service, the object of which is to suggest the most suitable training and jobs and to place them in such jobs. Courses in horticulture, retail selling, automobile repairing, household and tea-room management are recommended. The fields which are found most suitable are agriculture, selling, domestic service, certain kinds of factory work, such as packing and selling, beauty culture and wardmaid service in hospitals. Since 1925 a questionnaire had been sent out annually to find out what past pupils were doing and it had been ascertained that in 1930 approximately 65 per cent. were employed; at the present time, owing to industrial depression, the percentage is probably less.

Ophthalmic supervision is of course essential, if anything more essential for the partially blind whose vision is in a state of change, than it is for the totally blind, and although we have no definite regulations, in practically all partially blind classes a thorough examination is made annually by an ophthalmic surgeon.

Dr. EICHHOLZ said that with regard to vocational training, Local Authorities can put into effect the permissive powers they possess for further education of the partially blind without necessarily making use of the blind training shops. There are schemes of instruction carried out by every large Authority possessing permissive powers in which the partially blind could be included. If the Voluntary Association envisages what

is needed and places this need before the appropriate department of the Local Authority, some solution of the problem might be arrived at.

The partially blind person of to-day may be totally blind a year hence, and it is the duty of someone to keep him under observation; there is no better set of bodies to whom this duty can be committed than the Voluntary Associations. Dr. Eichholz suggested that the Union should do something similar to what it was doing with regard to the prevention of blindness, that is, to appoint a small committee to go into the problem of the partially blind in all its aspects, and then frame a programme of what action could be taken under the existing laws, and if existing laws were inadequate, to go forward and work for more legislation in due course.

Mr. LOVETT said he was in entire agreement with the general proposition but would like to throw out the warning that if the Committee began to talk about extending blind legislation to the partially blind, it might damage the cause of the blind, as the question would at once be raised as to why so much should be done for the partially blind when there were so many other categories of afflicted persons for whom far less was being done.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that as the Executive Committee of the Union was composed of representatives of the various Associations the whole matter might be referred to it.

Mr. EVERY pointed out that there were at present no teachers trained in sight-saving methods in this country and suggested that the Board of Education

might be able to help administratively in arranging for courses of specialist training for students in Elementary Training Colleges, by which means a supply of trained teachers would gradually be available. If in the re-organisation of education that is going on, accommodation could be provided in the new schools for a special class for the partially blind, the vital need would be for the trained teacher and it was only through the training colleges that this need could be met.

Mr. TATE suggested that voluntary organisations for the blind and particularly the blind schools might materially assist in putting their experience at the disposal of the Board of Education if the problem of provision for the partially blind child were to be investigated.

There was further the problem of the adult with defective sight, whose degree of blindness did not entitle him to be treated as a blind person and whose condition appeared to be nobody's concern. Mr. Tate suggested that the statements made at the International Conferences in 1905 and 1914 were worthy of consideration in connection with this subject.

Dr. RITCHIE (South-Eastern and London Counties) referred to a Joint Committee of the College of Teachers and the National Institute for the Blind which would be dealing with some aspects of the subject, and suggested that any action taken by the Union should include close co-operation with the Joint Committee.

The CHAIRMAN asked whether it was the opinion of the Council that a special Committee should be set up or that the matter be referred to the Executive Committee which was a representative body.

On the proposal of Mrs. Barton Land, seconded by Mr. Dixon, the following resolution was carried:—

“That the problem of provision for the partially blind be referred to the Executive Committee.”

Report of the Prevention of Blindness Committee.

The CHAIRMAN read the Report, copies of which had been circulated, as follows:—

“The last report of the Committee was made to the Union on the 20th November, 1930. Since that date the appointment in December of an Assistant Secretary, in accordance with the terms of the resolution adopted at that meeting, has freed the Secretary to carry out investigations in the following County and County Borough Councils: Cheshire, Cumberland, Gloucestershire, Lancashire, Northumberland, Surrey, Carlisle, Chester, Eastbourne, Gloucester, Hastings, Hull, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Wolverhampton. She has also visited a number of Blind Agencies in order to ascertain at first hand the arrangements made for dealing with cases of defective sight and to discuss problems of Registration and Certification of the blind, with a view to laying the foundation upon which accurate statistics may be built.

At the special request of the Committee the Secretary has visited and reported on the Certification of the Blind Clinic set up by the Corporation of Glasgow, where the services of four ophthalmic surgeons, two of whom attend sessions twice weekly, are available for examining and certifying blind persons.

From representations made to Dr. Bridge, Senior Medical Inspector of Factories at the Home Office, it is

probable that the Home Office will encourage the use of gauze veils in works where drilling and grinding is carried on. The widespread use of these veils should help to minimise eye hazards in the particular branch of industry for which they are suitable. These veils were brought to the notice of the Union in the first place through Mr. Mullens, Chairman of the South Wales and Monmouthshire Counties Association, and their use has been strongly advocated by Mr. Bernard Cridland of Wolverhampton.

The Secretary is arranging a number of shorter visits up to the date of the Annual Meeting."

The CHAIRMAN added that since the issue of the Report the Secretary had carried out investigations in Staffordshire and Derbyshire and had made arrangements to go to Lincolnshire the following week. She had already covered a considerable amount of ground and was gathering information of which it was hoped good use would be made.

Mr. LOVETT endorsed Dr. Ritchie's plea for co-operation in this as in other fields of work. The Northern Counties Association was doing valuable service in co-ordinating ophthalmic opinion in the North, but it appeared desirable that the Prevention Committee should be referred to when such action was contemplated, in order that the particular action proposed might be considered in relation to the country as a whole.

Mr. Lovett spoke of the value of the representation on the Prevention Committee of members of three eminent ophthalmological bodies, and of the advantage accruing from the co-opting of Medical Officers of Health, one of whom was the son of Mr. Tate, the honoured friend and colleague of all present.

Mr. TATE explained the position in the North, and the urgent need that had arisen for obtaining a classification of the causes of blindness for use in connection with the Register of the Blind. The North was anxious to go ahead, and he was strongly of opinion that to give a lead was better than to mark time. If they had erred, it was in being over zealous.

Mr. LOVETT said that the Prevention Committee was as much a Committee for the North as for the rest of the country but that independent action was liable to hamper co-operative effort.

The CHAIRMAN hoped that in future the Committee would receive all possible support, as it was only through co-operation that effective action could be taken.

White Sticks for the Blind.

Mr. TATE stated that he had been asked by the Executive Committee to come to the meeting armed with a white stick, a request which he had duly obeyed. He quoted from the report of a Conference of Home Teachers held recently in Manchester when the opinion had been expressed that the use of a white stick might be an advantage if adopted voluntarily and not imposed. The white stick was a signal to the sighted that the person who carried it needed assistance. It might also be a signal to the police, who could not always tell whether a person was blind or not.

Mr. Tate went on to say that he had asked what view was taken by the employed blind in Bradford and understood that they were not in favour of the white stick, but that the Home Teacher found that

those among whom she visited believed it would be helpful. The total cost of the stick, of which he had brought a sample, was, when painted, 10½d.

Mr. MINES (Northern Counties) was of opinion that an ordinary stick could be used in such a way that the attention of the public could be drawn to the need for assistance. He deprecated any mark which would advertise the fact of blindness.

Mr. A. K. TURNER (Eastern Counties) feared that if the white stick were looked on in any way as a safeguard, that would be an additional danger, and that its use might lead to accidents. If blind people were to go about alone, it was better that they should be trained to use their powers rather than to trust to such a device as carrying a white stick. He thought that more attention should be paid to training the blind to avoid the dangers in their own homes and in the streets.

Canon BOLAM agreed with the previous speaker. He believed it was becoming the practice among the youthful blind to use no stick at all and was not himself in favour of the use of the white stick.

Miss LYON believed there were a certain number of people who found comfort and safety in a distinguishing mark, but if any device were to be adopted, it was important that it should be uniform for the whole country. One Rotary club had supplied all the blind of their district with white sticks and there were doubtless others which had done or were considering doing the same. If the Union could give some guidance for the whole country it would help to ensure that the same distinguishing mark became universal.

Miss URMSON believed it might be well to encourage those who cared to use the white stick to do so, but to leave it to individual choice.

Mr. TURNER was strongly of opinion that such a distinguishing mark would not be generally acceptable to the blind, who prefer not to be made conspicuous. He was against a stick being supplied until the matter had been more generally discussed.

Mr. BELL (North-Western Counties) was not in favour of the use of the white stick: the blind who went about always with a guide needed no stick and if those who were accustomed to going about alone lost their confidence, they were in need of a guide and not a white stick.

Mr. TATE agreed that the matter might be deferred. In six months' time it might be possible to estimate the popularity of the sticks and how far they were being used.

It was agreed that the subject should be considered at another meeting.

UNION OF COUNTIES ASSOCIATIONS FOR THE BLIND.

OPEN SESSION

**Held at Clothworkers' Hall, Mincing Lane, E.C.3.
on Thursday afternoon, 25th June, 1931.**

Dr. ARTHUR BOUSFIELD, Master of the
Clothworkers' Company in the Chair.

The meeting was devoted to reports and impressions of the recent World Conference on the Blind, held in New York in April, 1931.

The CHAIRMAN, in opening the meeting, said that the great importance of the recent World Conference on the Blind and the interest which it had evoked, make it peculiarly suitable that this meeting should be held and he was very glad to welcome so large a company to the Clothworkers' Hall that afternoon. An endeavour had been made to arrange the programme so as to cover most of the ground occupied by the Conference itself.

The following papers were read and, in order to complete the survey, it has been decided to print the paper on the

Educational Aspect by Miss Garaway, who was unavoidably absent through illness, although this paper has since appeared in the *Teacher of the Blind*:

Home Services in the United

States of America

by Miss J. A. MERIVALE.

Braille

by Dr. E. WHITFIELD.

The Industrial Aspect

by Mr. S. W. STARLING.

The Relationship of the Blind to

the Community at large

by Captain IAN FRASER.

The General Aspect

by Mr. W. MCG. EAGAR

and Mr. F. R. LOVETT.

WORLD CONFERENCE ON THE BLIND.

The Educational Aspect.

By Miss M. M. R. GARAWAY.

I came back from a visit, which has been full of interest, feeling that much as I have to say about it I have but touched the fringe of the matter, and that some of the opinions I have formed may be open to correction. It was impossible in the comparatively short time at our disposal to go thoroughly into all the matters of interest, and it is difficult and perhaps dangerous to attempt to generalise.

There are, however, aspects upon which I can speak without reservation. One is the overwhelming kindness with which we were treated on all hands. It is impossible to describe the generous hospitality and thoughtful consideration which met us wherever we went; our comfort was secured and our needs were met almost before we were conscious of them; and though we wished to express our thanks adequately, I, for my part, felt quite unable to do so—ordinary thanks did not meet the occasion.

Buildings.—We were shown some of the finest schools for the blind in the country, and, as far as buildings go, we have nothing to compare with them here. The buildings and their settings are most beautiful. Those that we saw, particularly those in New York, Philadelphia and Boston, had beautiful and spacious grounds, with their residential, administrative, kindergarten and hospital buildings conveniently grouped. Some had cloisters and charming gardens, others, as at Boston, had a close filled, when we were there, with flowering trees and lined with cottages, each housing, say, 20 pupils. It was obvious that no expense had been spared to make the buildings beautiful and convenient, with large, airy class-rooms and broad corridors, and in the dwelling houses comfortable sitting-rooms, light dormitories, and ample and very modern bathing and other domestic arrangements. All these buildings set in wide stretches of lawn with shady and flowering trees.

Curriculum.—The grading of American Schools differs from that of this country. There is no distinction between Elementary and Secondary as we know it, no working on what is to some extent parallel lines, with limited or less limited aims. In the United States there is the Kindergarten leading to the Primary, from there to the Junior High School or Grammar School, eventually to the High School and University, the same schools for all, the only question being how far in the scale the individual student shall advance, whether he shall fall out after the Grammar School stage, or move on to the High School or again higher still to the University. The schools for the blind are designed on the same lines, and some of our points of difference are due to this.

The schools naturally vary, but the general course followed appears to be similar, though there are considerable differences in detail. For instance, I found three different kinds of arithmetic types in use in three different schools, one, which required a square holed board of three varieties of type, struck me as greatly increasing what are already serious drawbacks to quick working; I also encountered three different systems of teaching reading.

The pencil handwriting in use at Perkins Institution has much to be said for it. The formation of the letters is as square as possible, and the hand is guided by a sheet of grooved cardboard beneath the paper. The children acquire a perfectly legible handwriting, and are allowed to do their work either in this script or in Braille. Their home letters are almost entirely written in pencil script, and the general advantage of being able to use this is obvious. The instruction is given first from wooden letters, and then from letters cut from sandpaper and pasted on cardboard. The letters are learnt in a few weeks, and a year, or less, is required for a child to learn to write usefully. Such writing could be introduced with advantage into our own schools.

Handwork.—The handwork taught was varied, largely on the lines that we adopt. Sewing, both by machine and hand, seems more practised than with us, and in Halifax we were told that some girls make their livings as dressmakers, a fact that appears to me to need some explanation.

The preparation for earning a living seems less seriously regarded in American schools than in ours. That aspect of the work appears to be considered outside

the province of the school, which is to give a good, all-round education. Probably the need to earn a living, especially in the case of girls, has been less urgent in the United States. Generally, on leaving school, girls have gone home and there helped domestically, or perhaps found domestic work with friends or neighbours. Only of late has a more urgent need of earning a living been felt. A feeling was expressed in one quarter that to take to industrial work was more or less a confession of failure. Successful students were placed in the sighted world in a variety of positions. The present trade depression is making this course much more difficult than it was, and forcing the preparation for industrial work to the front.

It is perhaps owing to the conditions I have described that handwork appears to be less well organized in the schools that we visited than in our own. Nowhere did I meet with such carefully planned schemes of work as we find in our English schools. The work seemed to have no definite aim.

On the other hand, domestic training appeared to be excellent, the departments were thoroughly well equipped for all kinds of cooking, laundry and housework. We might do well to give more attention to this subject.

Physical Training.—In every school for the blind which we visited the physical training was excellent. It was very varied, and on much the same lines as we find in our own schools. Frequently there were good swimming baths and always a well-provided gymnasium. Dancing was well taught, and the general carriage of both boys and girls noticeably good. Nowhere, however,

did we find games organized. The playing fields were large, and all sorts of swings and other apparatus provided, but the need for any organization in games was not recognized, though Scout Troops and Girl Guides were popular, generally officered by members of the school staff and not from outside.

EDUCATION OF BLIND CHILDREN IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR THE SEEING.

The practice of educating blind children in Public Schools for the Seeing is virtually unknown to us. It is a practice that has been generally adopted in some of the large towns of the United States—Cleveland, for instance, where we were able to see the work in full progress. The enthusiasm for this method of those who use it is immense; they think it infinitely superior to the special school system, and maintain that children educated in this way have far more normal reactions and are infinitely better able to take their places in the world beside seeing people than are children educated in special schools, even though great pains have been taken to bring such children into contact with seeing people.

In the West of Scotland a similar method is in use. The children attend a special class in the morning, and in the afternoon the ordinary classes of the schools to which they are attached.

In the United States, or in any case, in the Cleveland schools, a class-room and a teacher are set apart for the blind children. Here the special instruction is given them, such as Braille and handwork; here all their work is prepared, with the help and under the guidance of the special teacher. This teacher, to be

successful, must be very versatile and well-informed, as she (it is generally a woman) has to be in close touch with the work of a large number of classes, ranging throughout the school. We saw work in the junior classes in one school, that is, from kindergarten to grade III, and the upper grades in a good high school later.

In the upper grades of the high school the blind children work with State-paid readers. The reader is usually another member of the same class as the blind boy or girl, and is generally chosen by the blind student. The two work together, so that the special class-room is less used, or not at all. This system appears to be satisfactory.

The subjects specially taught to blind children are Braille, handwork and music. Handwork appeared to be somewhat slightly dealt with, but in no school that we saw, either special or otherwise, is the same stress laid upon handwork as is usual in this country.

Many of those with whom I discussed the two systems of education—people who were not directly interested in either—were very much in favour of the public school system. Their argument was that those educated in this way were so much better able to hold their own in the world; they had a truer estimate of their own abilities, and were less likely to suffer either from false vanity or lack of self-confidence. However, it appeared to me, and I found it was not an uncommon opinion, that the system was most successful in the case of the better type of grade A pupil; he appeared to benefit from it to a fuller extent than he would from the education in a special school. With pupils who

would rank as grade B or C, it was less beneficial; they frequently did better in a special residential school.

Some educationalists recommend that the whole of the early life of a blind child shall be spent in a special school, and that when he is firmly grounded in Braille, and only when he has reached the grammar school stage, shall he be transferred to the public school. There is much to be said for this, provided that the child is of the type to profit from the other system of education. Heads of special schools often recommend that all pupils who reach the high school stage should spend the last year, or years, of their school life in the public school of their home town, so that they may know and be known by those with whom they are going to live and work.

The towns that adopt the public school system of education meet the difficulty of indifferent homes by appointing a supervisor visitor, whose duty it is to visit the parents, and to help and advise them on the matter of the education and care of their blind child. Should it prove necessary, the child may be boarded out, or sent to a residential special school.

Training of Teachers.—The United States demands no special qualifying examination from its teachers of the blind, but for both school and home teachers courses of training exist.

For school teachers there is a six months' course in connection with Harvard University. The lectures last from September to January, and cover a wide field; they are accompanied by demonstrations and practical exercises, and an assigned course of reading; they

conclude with an examination on the work done. This course is followed by another on special methods, in connection with Perkins Institution for the Blind and lasting from January to June. Kindergarten, intermediate and high school methods and manual training are dealt with, and especially the problems which arise in teaching blind children. The students live in the Perkins Institution, and are attached to various classes, thus getting practical experience.

At Overbrook, the Philadelphia School, there is a training course of two years for home teachers. The first year's work is carried out at the school. History of teaching the blind, Moon, the teaching of the deaf-blind and various kinds of handwork are taught. During the second year the course is carried on in connection with the Philadelphia Social Welfare Centre. Casework, racial differences, insurance, hygiene, etc., are dealt with. This course for home teachers is taken by many pupils of the school, who are unable to take a university education.

At the close of the Conference, I was fortunate enough to have a delightful tour by car, going north and south, and eventually west to Chicago—in all more than 1,800 miles of road. I saw most lovely scenery; we crossed the Berkshire and Alleghany Mountains, with enormous stretches of view, and that, in spring-time, when the trees were just bursting into leaf and the orchards of apple, pear, plum and peach were a mass of blossom, coming out at last on to the border of the prairie land, with miles of straight road over slightly rolling country. We visited large towns, with fine buildings, schools and universities. I saw four of the latter, each one splendidly equipped with beautiful

buildings, set in what is termed its *campus* or broad grounds. On all hands the generous provision and zeal for education is conspicuous.

I have come back with a crowd of delightful memories of a beautiful country, which gives an impression of youth and vigour, and of the kindest and friendliest of peoples.

Home Services in the United States of America.

By Miss J. A. MERIVALE.

I feel rather diffident about reporting on "Home Services" in the United States. For "Education" Miss Garaway was able to visit the schools—New York, Perkins, Overbrook, etc.—to watch classes and draw conclusions from her own experience and talks with teachers and children. For "Braille" Dr. Whitfield could study the Ziegler Press at work, turning out its embossed sheets like some Niagara of printing, and examine at leisure the great libraries at Washington or the historical collections at Perkins. For "Industry," Mr. Starling, notebook in hand, had the run of every workshop, and could make comparisons with his own workshops at Birmingham.

But I had no opportunity to go round with a Home Teacher into the homes of the blind and could attend only one of their social evenings. Our time was too limited and our programme too full; the impressions, therefore, that I have gathered must be secondhand, and I fear rather superficial.

Certain definite impressions, however, I have received :—

The Social Service side of work for the blind makes a strong appeal to Americans. They are a warm-hearted people, full of enthusiasm and eager to learn from the experience of others how best to help the blind to live normal lives, both as members of the family and as citizens. To this end they try to avoid segregation of the blind as far as possible. Vacancies in the Sunshine Home at Boston, for instance, are at the moment filled by sighted babies who need care for other reasons, and the experiment is found on both sides to be successful. The experiment of mixing blind with seeing children in school is also said to be giving satisfactory results: home life and contact with the sighted family is preserved by the preference for day rather than residential, schools where this is practicable, or by sending the pupils home for the week-end when they live too far away to go and come daily. In later life they try to place the blind worker in a sighted factory, though the increasing use of machinery is making this more and more difficult. In recreation they take special pains to mix blind with seeing friends at their social gatherings and entertainments.

In short, the leading idea is to enable the blind to take their place in the world as normal human beings rather than to train them for specialized work.

The Home Teaching Service in America is not so fully developed as with us. Up to the present time only about half the States have a Home Teaching Service; they stand perhaps about where we did twenty years ago. But how much more difficult their problem is

than ours! The area is so vast, and each of the forty-eight States does the work in its own way, so that what is true of one State is only partly true of another. Needs and conditions vary too, as may be readily understood when you reflect that Rhode Island, for example, is an old-established State about the size of Cornwall, while Texas—one of the latest to join the Union—is four times as large as England and Wales. Missouri in 1860 and Pennsylvania in 1882 were the first States to establish a Home Teaching Service. Missouri now has ten Home Teachers, of whom five are men and five women, all blind, while Pennsylvania, with an area of 45,000 square miles—nearly the size of England—and a population numbering only about one-eighth of ours, has seven Home Teachers, only one of whom is a man, and only one of whom is sighted.

America has difficulties too of colour, race and language, of which we know nothing. In one school I was told they had children speaking ten different languages. When one thinks of all this, the small number of Teachers and the distances they have to cover, one understands how restricted the service must be. As a matter of fact they do not follow up with a regular system of After-Care as we do, partly for the reasons stated above, but even more because financial conditions have hitherto been much easier in America than here, and the family is generally—more often than is the case with us—able and willing to maintain its blind member, who may do a little pastime work to earn pocket money, but does not need regular full time employment. As one Home Teacher told me: “They say, ‘I have learned to read and write at school and I dont’ want your help.’ ”

Teaching adults, who became blind after school age, to read and to use a typewriter, with a few simple handicrafts, especially needlework for women, are the principal duties of Home Teachers; they also report any new cases they may hear of and help in marketing goods. These goods are not up to the standard of our Home Workers' produce; they are for the most part what we should call pastime work.

For the rest, the work of the Home Teacher is supplemented by the Field Worker—a State agent, who reports new cases and does the welfare work.

The Home Teachers are, with few exceptions, blind women, because this is regarded as one of the few professions open to them; also school teaching generally is done by women in the U.S.A., rates of pay not being high enough to attract an equally good class of men. The rates for Home Teachers vary considerably, however—Pennsylvania gives about £3 15s. per week, out of which the Home Teacher has to pay her own travel and guide, but it is hoped to raise the rate before long. Missouri pays a good deal more.

I attended a "Round Table" of Home Teachers one evening during the Conference. We had, I suppose, about thirty who were all ready to speak and contribute their experiences. They were enthusiastic women, full of interest and joy in their work.

Quite recently several States have begun to require a diploma for Home Teachers, and Pennsylvania has set up a two years course of training—Braille and Moon, history and theory in the first year, and in the second year practical work in a social service centre.

My third impression is the excellence of their Homes and Social Centres. Here I think America takes the lead. I bracket the two together because in several places that we visited the Home is also used as a Centre for social gatherings.

Chapin Industrial Home, an offshoot of Overbrook, includes a workshop for men and a Home for the aged and infirm. There is a reading room, and ladies come and read aloud in the evenings. Dances and concerts are held to which an equal number of sighted and of blind people are invited. In all these social activities a large part is played by such organisations as the "Lions" Clubs, Elks Clubs and Guilds of Social Service.

Grasselli House, Cleveland, has a small but businesslike workshop with a residential Home for women attached. Here they keep open house on Sundays with tea and music, and it is also the centre for Home Teaching and all social services for the blind in that part of Ohio. The famous "Lighthouse" of New York, where blind folk of all ages are made welcome, has a small kindergarten for children, industrial training and employment for adults, and is a centre for Home Teaching, Visiting and Welfare Work, for recreation, dancing, Boy Scouts, swimming, Glee Clubs, etc., etc. They also run a children's camp and summer home for adults, an eye clinic and a shop for the sale of goods. The Lighthouse motto is "Open the door of opportunity to the blind, for whom the heaviest burden is not blindness but idleness."

What struck me so much about these Homes was not only the beauty of their buildings and perfect equipment, but the really homelike atmosphere which

relieves them of a great deal of the institutional character—the rigidity which sometimes seems inseparable from a public institution. At Chapin, for instance, we found one old fellow, too old for the workshop, perfectly happy with his carpenter's bench up in his bedroom.

America resembles England in the number and variety of her voluntary societies and the large part they play in the realm of social and philanthropic work. I think it is not fanciful to say that the voluntary spirit permeates right through their system in regard to the blind. There are something like thirty voluntary societies dealing with various aspects of blind work in New York City and State alone. There, as here, it is the voluntary worker who has discovered the need and pointed the way.

Another "impression" is the magnificence of the buildings and their surroundings—Overbrook with its cloisters and magnolia-scented gardens; New York Institution with its spacious houses set in the open lands above the great City; and Perkins, rose-coloured in the evening light, its English close and its great library and green lawns looking across the river—all these and much more founded and endowed by private benefactors.

In a time of financial stringency like the present we may be tempted to ask if it is not all unnecessarily lavish and beyond the occasion. But I don't know—thinking of these places one feels that the same faith which inspired the founders of our own Cathedrals and Colleges is still living in our modern world, bequeathing to generations yet unborn a noble heritage of beauty and service.

Lastly, I must speak of the great kindness and hospitality we received on all sides. By which I do not mean merely the dinners and receptions, or the liberality which carried us, free of charge, from place to place. All that was wonderful, but it was something more than that—the thoughtful care for our convenience and comfort, the friends who took us under their care and saw that we had everything we wanted and missed nothing that we ought to see; and all with such kindness and good humour as made us almost feel that we were giving *them* all the pleasure.

Indeed, the most valuable fruits of the Conference will be found, I think, in the sympathy and understanding of each other which we gained in those few days of intimate contacts; and the establishment of an International Bureau at Paris which shall build upon the foundations thus laid is the practical expression of that spirit and of the growing sense of interdependence and need for co-operation which is never more apparent than in dealing with the world-wide problems of blindness.

Braille.

By Dr. ERNEST WHITFIELD.

I was asked to speak this afternoon about the latest developments in an endeavour to get a uniform type of Braille for the English-speaking countries. I felt, as everybody must feel, diffident about speaking on a subject which had really only been broached, so far as its new stage was concerned, and which was entirely *sub judice*. After thinking the matter over,

however, I came to the conclusion that I was going to speak to a body of experts who had dealings with the blind, and in consequence, that it was possibly their right to know that something was developing, so that they might set their minds in the direction of thinking of the possibility of some changes in the system which we are using to-day.

For some generations after Braille first launched his marvellous new discovery, the system was not by any means the only one in the field. It had many competitors. In America, for example, at the opening of this century there were two other systems of point writing in vogue, and the idea had occurred to many people on both sides of the Atlantic that a uniform system would be highly desirable. The first active steps to come to some understanding were taken in 1905. Real progress was not made, however, until 1917, when American readers of raised type decided to scrap the American Braille and New York point, and to adopt a system which is based on the Braille used in England. We were using Grade 2, however, and the Americans thought that Grade 2 was by no means a perfect system. They decided to adopt something between Grade 1 and Grade 2, using some 45 contractions and abbreviations, whereas here we use 189.

After the war the movement for uniformity was carried on. That went forward until quite recently all negotiations suddenly ceased, and we seemed to have arrived at a complete deadlock, which was thoroughly unsatisfactory. There was then a movement afoot, possibly a repercussion in the world of the blind to the general movement towards internationalism, with the object of securing a closer understanding with the

blind of every other country. The New York Conference was only one manifestation of that world-wide movement. Part of that movement was directed to getting the same system of Braille adopted on both sides of the Atlantic. The advantages of such a course are obvious to all thinking men and women.

In the first place, however proud we may be of the National Library of the Blind in this country, containing probably about 185,000 volumes, we have to think in this matter not only absolutely but relatively, and when we consider that number in the light of the volumes in the library of the British Museum, or the London Library, or any of the municipal or even smaller libraries, the effort appears almost insignificant. We find that in America also there is a desire for more books for the blind, and there has been in consequence a tremendous amount of duplication, those on the other side of the Atlantic being in Grade 1½, and those on this side in Grade 2—the same books. This is a terrible waste in view of the slim resources available to the blind world. It therefore seemed imperative, even if it should cost some sacrifice, to come to an understanding with our American friends.

When the delegation from Great Britain, together with a few representatives from the Dominions, arrived on board the "Carinthia," Mr. Eagar convened committee meetings, at which we had to work very hard, spending at least half of each day at them. During those meetings the international aspect was discussed. One of the things in which Mr. Eagar is interested is the interchange of books, and inevitably the question arose how we could have an interchange of books if the Braille on one side of the Atlantic is not intelligible

to the bulk of the readers on the other. We felt the position to be a very difficult one. A meeting was therefore called of all those who were directly interested in Braille, and there again we felt hampered. We knew that there was a perfectly good Uniform Type Committee in existence in England, but we had no means of consulting with it when any particular subject arose. Possibly the feeling of that Committee would be that the position from the British point of view was quite clear. Nevertheless, we felt that it would be discourteous if the problem arose when we got to New York, and we had to say that we had no instructions, and must refuse to debate the matter at all. Moreover, the occasion presented a golden opportunity for trying to see whether the differences could not be somehow bridged. We felt, on reviewing our forces, that we were possibly in a stronger position than at first sight seemed to be the case. In the first instance, we had the good fortune to have two members of the Uniform Type Committee with us, one of them the Secretary of the College of Teachers, who has had a tremendous experience in teaching, and the other a fully qualified person who has been teaching Braille for many years. Amongst others there was the headmaster of Worcester College, a prominent Scottish Home Teacher, the Chairman of St. Dunstan's, and an eminent representative from Australia, the Hon. Librarian of the Library there, who had himself been engaged for many years in home teaching. We therefore felt that we were in quite a representative position, and this body nominated me as its Chairman.

When we got to New York, the question of uniform Braille cropped up very early in the proceedings, and we were compelled to go ahead. On former occasions when

representatives from America came to Britain to discuss the matter, they had to do so in formal committee meetings, possibly in uncongenial surroundings, and subject to having discussions cut short. In America we had the advantage of being able to see all the important heads of institutions, libraries, and so forth who had intimate dealings with Braille all over the country. We got to know their mentality. We saw them in the provinces, in their homes. We saw other librarians, other Braillists, and other blind people, and thus we were able to come back with a tremendous amount of knowledge—a type of knowledge which it is difficult to put down on paper in set terms, but which consists of sensing the situation, the mentality, and the spirit of the people. We also had the advantage of speaking with a large number of representatives from the Dominions, and thus we have now a body of information which has never been possessed before.

These discussions went on for two and a half weeks, and we came to the obvious conclusion that a large variety of opinion existed in America. That is obvious, because wherever there is active thought there must be a vast diversity of opinion.

What we decided to do, therefore, was to ask our American friends to get together and hammer out a number of principles which they could put before us—principles on which there was agreement among themselves, and which we thought we should feel justified in placing before our own Uniform Type Committee for their sanction. We clearly made it understood that we had no mandate from Britain, and that in consequence, the validity of what we said was contingent on the final sanction of the properly consti-

tuted authorities at home. They, for their part, made it perfectly clear that they were in the same position. We also pointed out that there were certain margins which could not be overstepped. For instance, nothing could be considered that would jeopardise the value of our existing stock of books. Another consideration which was of the utmost importance was that we could not tolerate suggestions which would make our Braille, already very bulky, still more so. The Americans were extraordinarily considerate and reasonable. They had their meeting, and after several hours of discussion they brought forward four points—I will deal with them in a moment—which we think we might reasonably place before the properly authorised people here. That has been done, and is at the moment under consideration. If those points are accepted, and if the American authorities also accept those points, we can go ahead. It has been suggested by the Americans that a small body of experts should be appointed on both sides to work out the implications of those four principles.

May I point out, before glancing at those principles, one or two important considerations?

In the first place, Congress has voted 100,000 dollars (£20,000) for Braille production for adult readers, this money to be expended after July 1st. Now, if the Americans get no hope that there will be an understanding, all their Braille presses will be set going after July 1st in Grade 1½, and after that the Americans, who are not satisfied that Grade 1½ is adequate, will evolve on their own lines. They will not accept Grade 2, because, with that amount of money, which they hope will be voted every year, they will be independent of British productions, and they are not

going to accept a system which they think is by no means perfect. There are many people in this country who will agree that Grade 2 is not perfect. It is a workable system, and has tremendous advantages, but it could be improved upon, and I think we have no right, therefore, to criticise the Americans should negotiations break down, if they go on evolving on their own lines. It means that in the end we shall have two distinct systems of Braille, one for each side of the Atlantic, the readers on the one side not being able—at least, not easily—to read the Braille of the other. We should lose the American production, and the Americans would lose ours.

Another point to be considered is the attitude of the people in the Dominions. They would deplore being driven away from the home country in this matter, and we should deplore it also. We want to keep every bond that we have, however slender, and sometimes what appear to be the slenderest are the strongest, with our Dominions. The Dominions must buy their books wherever they can find them.

In certain parts of the Empire there is a strong bond of affinity with America, and that country is looked upon as the source of books. If this matter develops in the way I have just indicated, these people, although in the British Empire, will be swept into American Braille, and out of English Braille.

I want briefly to indicate the four principles which I mentioned earlier.

In the first place, the Americans suggest that for educational purposes—for the use of schools—each country should be free to print in whichever Braille is

preferred. That sounds more serious than it really is, because whichever type of Braille we use will strongly influence the type that is used in the school books. The Braille used in the school books must always be determined with an eye on what the children will read when they grow up. Consequently the difference there is slighter than would at first sight appear. There would not be a very large exchange of school books, because those we use in this country would not be suitable to America; there would be a different geography, a different emphasis on history, and so forth—and *vice versa*.

The second principle which the Americans make is that the use of the capital sign, whatever sign it may be, should be optional. As to which capital sign shall be used can be decided later on, and I have reason to think that there will not be a very great difficulty in the choice of the sign.

The third principle is that we shall not be bound so religiously to the use of our contractions or combinations of letters. The Americans do not like to see—nor for that matter do I—the word “untouched,” for example, spelt with the sign for “unto” and then the letters “uched.” Many people in this country feel the same thing. In the case of unusual words it really means a slacking of speed. On the other hand, it was felt that to adopt the American view would have the result of making our books still more voluminous. The Americans have been asked not to be too logical about that, and I do not think they will. They have agreed to draw up a short list of uses of those abbreviations to which they particularly object, and in the aggregate I should think that it will not mean more than half a page difference in a volume. As there is very often half a page to spare

at the end of the volume, it will mean that there is really no greater bulk involved.

The fourth point is a more difficult one. The first suggestion of the Americans was practically to split the difference so far as abbreviations and contractions are concerned as between Grade 1½ and Grade 2. They have relinquished that standpoint entirely. What they now suggest is that a Joint Committee should consider which of our signs are not used very much and are not space saving, and that these should be relinquished, possibly putting them into a list for optional use, which may be reserved for special books, and such a list might even be increased in the case of specialists. They propose that the place of these signs should be taken by other signs. They are willing even to go to the extent that, supposing we give up 20 signs, they would be willing to allow us to adopt in their places even a far larger number of signs which are really space saving. That is a tremendous advance on the position as it was a year ago. It means, I think, that the Americans have gone more than 95 per cent. of the way to meet us. It means that Braille revised in that sense will be a better Braille than Grade 2 is at present, and even if it may cause a certain amount of annoyance now, it will be a tremendous advantage in the future.

It must be remembered that every advance inevitably means friction, annoyance, even the sacrifice of something. Therefore, speaking personally, and in the name of some of my colleagues, I hope very much that this matter will now be gone into again, and I sincerely believe that what will emerge will be actual uniform type for the English-speaking world, a better Braille, and a better understanding with our brothers across the Atlantic.

The Industrial Aspect.

By Mr. S. W. STARLING.

Apart from the enjoyable time the delegates to the World Conference spent in America, the many places we visited and the interesting things we saw, be it understood that one of the reasons we went to America was to give, as well as to receive, and fortunately for us we were in the very happy position of having much to give. We rejoice in the opportunities afforded to us of quietly and unostentatiously putting our point of view which it is pleasing to relate was not only sought after but generally welcomed by our American friends.

Most of you, I expect, will have seen the June issue of the "New Beacon" and will have read in all probability the summing-up of the rapporteurs on the four chief subjects discussed at the World Conference.

It is not my intention to repeat what was said by Mr. Swift of Toronto and Mr. Akiba of Japan in their report on the subject of Employment, much of which I have already made reference to in the addresses I have been called upon to give since my return from America. I propose, therefore, to give you a general review of conditions existing in American Workshops, and then to speak about that part of the subject from which we are most likely to learn something useful and which may possibly hold out the greatest hope of providing new and practical avenues of employment.

Workshops.

America has about 50 Blind Workshops which vary, as ours do, in the numbers they employ. The largest we visited employs 116 men and 45 women. They also

have a number of Industrial Homes where blind men and women happily pass away the time in some occupation or other, the object being to keep these people contentedly employed regardless of the quantity of work they do. These Homes cannot be regarded as Workshops in the ordinary sense of the word. Some Workshops receive financial assistance from their State Commission, an organisation set up by the State for the welfare of the blind. In most cases wages are paid on a piece-work rate basis, and the average earnings, after allowing for the difference in the cost of living in America as compared with this country, are, generally speaking, higher than the average earnings of our workers in England, a state of affairs which is pleasant to record. As a general rule no augmentation is paid to blind workers; in fact, we found that a system of augmentation existed in only one of the Workshops we visited. The scale of augmentation in operation is similar to our own, providing the most assistance to the low wage earner. In some districts the worker receives an allowance from the State which probably accounts for the non-payment of augmentation in the Workshops. A five-day week seems to be general, and the workers are allowed a fortnight's holiday per annum with pay, as well as public holidays.

The general trade depression has had its effect on American Workshops where periods of unemployment are not unknown. On these occasions the general practice is to pay the workers their average weekly wage.

When I went to America I hoped that I should find there among the occupations in which the blind are engaged something different from the work we do in our

Workshops here in England; I felt that if I could return with even one new occupation which could be introduced in this country with a hope of a reasonable measure of success my visit in that respect, apart from other considerations, would have proved worth while. I am happy to relate that I not only found one occupation but several worthy of consideration; some were not new industries entirely except in certain phases of their development which, as far as I know, are new to the blind in this country.

Occupations.

These are the occupations I feel are worthy of comment:—

1. *Weaving for Men.*

We are all familiar with the kind of woven work produced by women on hand looms in this country, but nothing has been done, as far as I know, to develop this industry on lines which will provide competitive work for men.

At the Jewish Guild for the Blind, New York, there is a successful Men's Weaving Department where blankets, coatings, dress materials, and handbag materials are woven. The work produced is for the wholesale market and averages about 50,000 dollars' worth per annum. The 20 men employed there earn on an average 20 dollars for a five-day week of 36 hours. Box looms are used with fly shuttle, and a fixture known as the "Dobby" attachment to facilitate speed is fastened to the loom. The output per man is from 14 to 18 yards of material a day.

I mention this occupation first as I feel it has the greatest possibilities of development in this country, but the whole position will need a thorough investigation.

2. *Varnish Brushes.*

I have brought with me a sample of the brushes made in the Pittsbergh Workshop of the Pennsylvania Association for the Blind.

There are four processes necessary for its manufacture—filling the ferrule with bristle, vulcanising, nailing on the wooden stock, and cleaning and flicking. The first is suitable for a totally blind man, while the other three provide work for the partially blind. A flat rate of wages is paid to the men at Pittsbergh as the Department is still in an experimental stage.

3. *Dolls' Wigs.*

This is another occupation found at the Guild of Jewish Blind, New York, where 20 women are employed in the manufacture of Dolls' Wigs. These wigs are made up with Chinese and Italian human hair and also mohair. There are two processes in wig making which can be successfully performed by the blind, viz., weaving the weft and weaving the parting. The same piece-work rates of wages are paid as in the sighted Workshops for the same kind of work. The average wage earned by the blind women is 2 dollars per day. A period of three months' training is regarded as sufficient to enable a woman of average ability to achieve reasonable speed. The weft, of which I have a specimen here, consists of a long string made up of four threads of silk or cotton stretched on a loom-like structure. Into these threads very deftly the women weave with their fingers a long row of hair which hangs from the string to the required length. This long string of hair is stitched round the scalp, which is made of a very fine gauze or canvas and to which the parting is

also stitched. Here is a specimen of the parting which is woven in a similar manner to the weft except that the string of threads has two rows of hair hanging from it, one on each side of the string, instead of the single row as in the case of the weft. These wigs, of which I have a finished specimen, are made for Doll Manufacturers in large quantities, and pieces of weft are supplied to Beauty Schools for practice purposes. The annual sales amount to between 20,000 and 25,000 dollars.

I have also brought a photograph illustrating blind women weaving the hair and from which you can get a fairly good idea of the kind of apparatus used for this purpose.

The specimen wig I have here has been curled and set. Partially blind girls can also be taught to do the curling.

The three occupations I have mentioned are suitable for Workshops. Now I come to two other occupations which although suitable for Workshops can easily be practised in the home.

4. *Wrought Iron Work.*

While I do not think this class of work is likely to provide employment for many workers, I mention it because it is unique and may prove of interest and be useful as a subsidiary occupation in the home. When I saw the experiment being tried in Boston at the Experimental Station of the Massachusetts Association for the Blind I felt that the occupation had possibilities but only for a man gifted with originality and blessed with a little sight.

Articles are made from wrought iron bars obtained in lengths of 12ft. of from $\frac{1}{2}$ in. to 1in. wide and from $\frac{1}{16}$ in. to $\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick, also rivets. The tools required are a hammer, hand-drill, hand-saw, files and jigs.

An enterprising man will shape his own jigs according to the patterns to be worked into the iron. Articles such as brackets for flower pots, tall candle-sticks and lamp-holders, etc., can be made in attractive shapes to please the whim and fancy of the designer.

5. *Waffle Rugs.*

These probably take their name from the Waffle Cake and is a kind of sinnet mat made of jute.

Round wooden pegs are inserted in a board or table to form the four sides of the mat. The jute is fastened to the first peg on the one side and then run down the length of the frame and round No. 2 peg on the opposite side, back to No. 3 peg opposite, round this to No. 4 peg opposite, and so on until the frame is filled in with jute. The jute is then carried round the last peg and drawn across the frame at right-angles to the first row, and the process of weaving from peg to peg is continued in that direction until the last peg is reached. This process is repeated until the mat is several strands thick, when the end of the jute is made fast. The next process is to tie with a knot each point where the jute passes at right-angles: this is done with a long needle and thread, or thin twine, which is taken diagonally across the squares formed by the jute, thus completing the design. The mat is then lifted off the pegs, the loops cut, and the loose ends combed into a fringe.

Attractive mats can be made in this way by using different coloured jute, which gives a multi-coloured effect.

Little or no skill is required to make these mats which form a suitable home occupation. Experiments would prove whether a market could be found for them.

Conclusion.

Other occupations in American Workshops differing from our own are String Mop Making—a popular trade but not worth considering commercially in this country—Corn Broom Making, one of the chief industries in Blind Workshops and a good example of what can be done with power-driven machinery. We cannot consider its introduction here, as it is unlikely that the British market would welcome this class of broom. I have illustrations here of this type of broom for those who wish to see them. Silk and Cotton Chenille Rugs and also Wool Rugs, woven on hand looms, are very attractive, but I am informed that the cheap imported mat from Japan is driving the products of the American Workshops from the market.

It would be imprudent to say we have in the occupations I have described something which is bound to be a success: what is successful in one country need not necessarily be a success elsewhere. They form the germ from which something useful may materialise, but a great deal of hard work and research will be necessary before the justification of the adoption or introduction of these industries can be proved.

The Relationship of the Blind to the Community at Large.

By CAPTAIN IAN FRASER.

It is very difficult indeed to discern any particular difference between the attitude of Americans as a people towards blind persons and the attitude of the British people towards that class of the community. If anything, I think the American people are a good deal more sentimental than we are, or perhaps I should say that they show their sentiment rather more strongly than we are apt to do. I do not think that their treatment of the blind is very different from ours; it is only perhaps a little less developed. They have developed their education of blind children, in my judgment, to a very high point. I have no technical standing from which to judge this matter, but I certainly thought that the equipment and the building, as well as some of the personnel, of the blind schools were as good as, and in some cases better than, we have over here.

We may ask why they have reached such a high standard of education if, as I am going to suggest, and as other speakers have suggested, they are behindhand in other ways. It is simply because they have reached the point in blind welfare in general that we reached twenty-five years ago, but having a great deal more money available for educational purposes, they have done the work particularly thoroughly. In America they keep all children at school longer than we do here, not only blind, but all children. They have developed their schools, as I have said, in a way which makes me admire them very much indeed. But it is strange that their efforts to find employment for blind people after

school should be so meagre. There are relatively few workshops, and those that do exist cater for only a small percentage of the blind persons who might be induced to find employment in them. Home Workers' schemes are also ill-developed.

I must say this about the Americans, which surprised and pleased me. At every turn they were willing to acknowledge the lessons learned from us. They were anxious to show us how they had embodied our ideas in their schemes, and I have no doubt whatever that they will have gone from the Conference with a determination to do a great deal more than they are now doing to find employment for blind people after their school days are over. To that extent we can claim to have made a contribution in the recent Conference which will be valuable to them.

We found amongst them a high appreciation of the Blind Persons Act as brought forward and administered in this country. This appreciation was evident, not only in American quarters, but amongst people of other nations who gathered for the Conference. A good many persons told us that the Blind Persons Act was a piece of legislation they greatly admired, and that they would seek to copy it if they could induce the authorities in their States to take more interest in the blind. Ours is probably the only country in which there is anything like a national Act which covers the whole country and gives an opportunity to every local authority to develop to a very high standard without any further sanction the work for the blind. In the United States only half the States have any State provision for the blind whatever, and there is no Federal provision, because their method of government does not require

that. Half the States make no provision for the blind from State resources, except, of course, in the matter of education.

I do not think that there is any doubt that not only in the United States, but in Germany, in France, and in Canada—possibly also in South Africa—efforts will be made to put on to the respective Statute Books Acts on the model of our Blind Persons Act, 1920.

Pensions is a subject in which every State ought to be interested, but in which at present very few of them are. There was a general consensus of opinion amongst delegates that some provision from the resources of the State ought to be made for blind persons by way of compensating them for their disability. Whether the provision be called pension or allowance, or whether it be paid by a central authority or a local one, is not a matter of primary importance. The point is that there was a very general feeling that the State ought to assume some responsibility for providing for each and every blind person who needs such provision.

The old argument came up as to the extent to which the State ought to supersede and vanquish voluntary effort. The general opinion which the Conference reached on that subject was one which will probably commend itself to most of you, namely, that there is so much need for assistance in the blind world that all agencies, whether State, municipal, or voluntary, should work together. A good deal of emphasis was laid upon the co-ordination and co-operation as between these agencies, which many are out to further.

Another principle which found general acceptance was that no form of State assistance should impede or

prevent a blind person from working, but, on the contrary, all forms of assistance should encourage him to do so. There was a natural fear expressed in some quarters that any form of State pension must necessarily render blind people less capable of work or less diligent. But it was laid down that pensions and allowances and methods of assistance coming through the State should be of such a nature that they implied some work or attempt at work on the part of the recipient.

After all, that is a very sound and fundamental principle. The blind person must needs have assistance—at least most blind persons must—but the duty rests upon him, nevertheless, to render what service he can to the community in return for the assistance he receives. I can say that the delegates from practically all countries supported that notion, which certainly seemed to express the sense of the Conference.

Some of the States in America provide pensions. Some have State Commissions for the blind which act generally in an advisory capacity. At times they have a certain amount of money at their disposal to use for the well-being of the blind. But even in those States there is nothing like the intimate relationship which we have here between the Ministry of Health, the local authorities, and the voluntary agencies. No doubt that will come, and there is no principle in the United States to be discerned which would inhibit such development. I think it is well, when you cannot find something positive to find something negative which is worth recording, and it is as well to report that there is no indication that American practice or theory differs from ours, it is merely that the development we have made here has not yet arrived there. I imagine that

within their States, as in this country, there will be a development along the lines of our own Act of Parliament and of co-operation between the Government agency and the other agencies which specifically care for the blind.

The most general impression which I think we received from the United States was their willingness to learn. They showed us on every occasion that they were anxious to know anything we could tell them. Their extraordinary cordiality and hospitality was very marked. They showed us everything they had to show, and evinced a real desire in their unofficial capacity to come into closer relationship with us. This has led to the setting up of the International Council, which is to be centred at Paris, and the Bureau which, from that centre, will distribute to all persons interested in the well-being of the blind information and statistics about blind welfare as these became available.

For my own part, I thought the most valuable thing about the Conference was the opportunity which it gave some of us from Britain to come together and meet each other at close quarters over an extended time. In that way we got to know more about each other's work. Another valuable thing was that we had the opportunity of meeting a great many people throughout the world with whom we have been in correspondence for years and years, but with whom we had never come into direct personal contact. It is a great advantage to know the character, the personality, and the attitude towards life of the person whom you are constantly addressing in correspondence. There are many distinguished people in the blind world, in its widest sense, notably in the United States, Germany, and France, with whom we have

made personal contacts as a result of this World Conference, to our great gain, and we shall keep it up by better informed and more intimate correspondence.

I have not time to say anything more of a general nature, but perhaps I may be permitted just one word on Canada. Some of us went on from the States to Canada. I spent a fortnight there after the Conference, and I found that the work in that Dominion had developed at an extraordinary rate, having regard to the fact that before the war there was no national effort there whatever, and only small isolated effort in such centres as Halifax and Montreal. I am not discrediting that isolated effort, it was pioneer work, which has led the way. Provincial and Dominion legislatures, however, have now been led to take an interest in blind people, to pass Acts of Parliament in their favour, and to make various concessions to them. There is a national sense about the blind in Canada which has been created within ten or twelve years.

I will not go into details about their workshops and their home workers' schemes. They are based on the lessons brought from Europe, and although they are not so developed as our own, yet having regard to the short time, they are doing well.

We learned that the same conditions applied in New Zealand. In that Dominion a tremendous development has taken place since the war in regard to the blind. The whole country has been led to think about the blind, and the level of the whole blind population has been raised to a point which it had never touched before. Legislation of a unique character has been introduced in New Zealand, and I would suggest to you that

you should study the New Zealand Blind Persons Act, which contains some interesting provisions.

A final word about blinded soldiers. There were about 150 American soldiers blinded in the Great War. There may have been more, some say there were more, but it depends to some extent on definitions, and I think the number 150 may be taken as representing the standard of comparison with our British figures. Our own figure was 2,500, and the number of Canadians included in this total was approximately 140. These American blinded soldiers were trained at Evergreen in Baltimore, on lines similar to those introduced at St. Dunstan's, but, unhappily, they have drifted away to various parts of that great continent, and no one seems to know where they have gone. It is true that these men do not need care in the same sense as our men do, because their pensions are so much greater, but, nevertheless, I regret what I discovered about blinded soldiers in America, because no blind person is made happy merely by an adequate pension. He needs more than that, he needs someone to look after him, to understand his abilities and capacities, and to guide him in a direction in which he can do useful and happy work. Unless there is a central or local organisation to follow him up, he is under a great disadvantage. As far as I can see, no central organisation follows him up—the organisation has been disbanded—and there is no local organisation, simply because he is relatively well off. That is a disastrous result, and I think in this country we are more fortunate in having in St. Dunstan's an institution which is strong and powerful and which does care for all the soldiers, sailors and airmen blinded in the Great War.

The General Aspect.

By Mr. W. McG. EAGAR.

My task is to gather up the sheaves in this discussion and see if there is any grain left still to be thrashed out. Before I do that, may I say first that we did all particularly regret the absence of two outstanding figures in the British world of the blind who were invited by the Committee to go, but were unable to do so, namely, Dr. Ritchie and Mr. Stone.

The team that we did take, too small as it was, played admirably and played together. On the first evening of our arrival, in an atmosphere that was at least 104° F., we had a reception, at which seven speeches were made, and after Captain Fraser had spoken as the English delegate, we found that he had charmed American brains and hearts to such an extent that it was very difficult to get them to ask any other Englishman to speak during the tour. Dr. Whitfield ruled the representatives of organisations of the blind—I will not say with a rod of iron, but with a rod of indiarubber wreathed with roses. Then I should like to say how much we appreciated the membership in our team of Miss Merivale, who showed her peculiar sympathy with American ideas and ideals this afternoon, when she pronounced the name of the State of Missouri as though it were spelt with a “z.”

We avoided certain dangers of spiritual pride. We did not say that the Blind Persons Act was perfect, and that every other country ought to imitate it, but we were told before the Conference was over by the representatives of several nations that they would very much like to model their legislation on ours.

Of four powerful impressions made on my mind, the first is of the great importance attached in America at the present time to the question whether it is fundamentally wise to segregate the blind. At the opening reception this was touched upon by a blind senator, who declared himself quite frankly against the segregation of the blind at all stages of their training and education. In Washington we found a group of people whose mission in the world of the blind was to denounce segregation and to work for a system in which the blind—infants, children, and adults—would be educated and trained in company with the sighted. I will not go into the pros and cons of that question, but I think it would be wrong to attempt to report on our impressions if that were not at any rate mentioned.

A second impression was made by a point of internal politics, namely, the difference of function between organisations of the blind and organisations for the blind. There were certain indications before the Conference met that there was a latent antagonism between those two sets of bodies, and the difference between them has been recognised to some extent in the constitution of the World Council for the Blind.

The third big impression was made by discovering in Toronto, workshops being run without a trade loss. This result was obtained after taking into account, so far as we could see, every business liability. So far as we could understand, an actual profit was made. If that is correct, it represents a very great achievement on the part of the present Directors of the Canadian National Institute of the Blind, and particularly Captain Baker.

The fourth point was one which must impress itself on anybody who studies social and economic conditions in the United States at the present time. The form and general direction of education and employment in the world of the blind is different from ours, to a large extent because the Americans are not driven along by the same economic urge. If I may quote a parallel case in illustration of what I mean—I took a “bus-man’s holiday” after the Conference was over and made a short enquiry into the question of unemployment in America. It emerged from that that until last winter’s depression came the Americans in general had not realised the existence in their midst of a standing army of unemployed. We are all wrong if we imagine that there was a labour famine in America until last winter. Even at the height of the boom there was an army of unemployed numbering not less than from 1,750,000 to 2,000,000 people. But what happened when long continued depression had exhausted savings was that the unemployed were found to have been carried on the general wealth of the community. It is the same with the blind to a very large extent; in America they have been carried on the general wealth of the community. There has not been in that country the same economic urge that drives us here to consider vocational training from quite an early stage, and to provide means for such training in the schools and after-school establishments.

Then there is the question of the international organisation which has been established. I do not know that the establishment of an international organisation of the blind requires any justification. No nation in these times can be a law unto itself. The British nation in particular cannot deny the missionary impulse which

has made the British Empire and justified the British race. No British organisation that has any sort of business aspect can refuse to take steps to rationalise and cheapen production, and it is obviously uneconomic to have the special tools and apparatus and appliances required by the blind made separately in every country, always in small numbers, and on a small scale, and always, therefore, at a great cost.

I need not, therefore, spend any time in justifying the setting up of the World Council for the Blind. All I need tell you is that after very many difficulties—which gave those of us who were concerned at first hand a great sympathy with the League of Nations!—the obstacles were overcome and the World Council for the Blind was established. It will have its office in Paris. It has an Executive Committee composed of two Americans—the President and the Vice-President—and nine other persons, each of them from a different country, most of them from Europe but one—Mr. Yoshimoto—a Japanese gentleman most keenly interested in the blind of Japan.

The tasks which that organisation will undertake will be as follows:—

(1) It will attempt the rationalisation of existing technical apparatus and appliances, and the co-ordination of technical research in all countries.

(2) It will endeavour to secure uniformity in Braille notation and in Braille music.

(3) It will undertake the collection and dissemination of information.

(4) It will set up a clearing house for literature, music, appliances, and apparatus for the blind.

(5) It will deal with all the group of questions connected with international communications, such as postage, customs, and so on.

(6) It will try to develop new work in backward countries. That is a very difficult task in which we are assured of the complete collaboration of the American Braille Press.

Altogether it is a pretty large programme, and I hope your blessing will lie richly on the World Council at the beginning of its very difficult task. Its finance has been assured to a very large extent for three years, largely owing to the generosity of Mr. Cromwell and Mr. Migel, respectively the President of the American Braille Press and the President of the American Foundation for the Blind.

If we get uniformity in Braille, I hope we shall also have laid the foundation for a complete system of interchange of books printed in all countries. We hope that from the time that uniformity in Braille between ourselves and America is established we shall be able to inform America of all books we propose to print in this country, and America will inform us. We shall thus avoid duplication, and be able to exchange set against set. The blind readers in England will thus have a full command both of English and American production, as will the blind in America.

Our visit fell out at an extremely fortunate time. America is now enjoying its Elizabethan age. It has a thirst for knowledge. It is erecting buildings which will be to future centuries what the European cathedrals are to us, though they are utilitarian rather than religious in motive. You can see now in America a development of social organisation and institutions,

some of it in an early stage, not more developed than our Poor Law in the time of Queen Elizabeth. But social organisation has an elaboration and massiveness which in this country we have hardly known.

It must be a joy to all of us concerned with the blind in Great Britain to know that the welfare of the blind has already in America drawn to itself its full share of financial support, its fair share of brain and directive ability, and, more than that, its fair share of voluntary helpers. I heard a story over there of the chief constable of a western town who was by profession a veterinary surgeon. One night he was rung up over the telephone, and his wife, who answered it, asked whether he was wanted in his capacity as chief constable or in that of a veterinary surgeon. The voice from the other end replied that he was wanted in both capacities. "We can't get the mouth of our bulldog open, and there is a burglar in it!" I can say that we went out to America in a double capacity. We went there as ambassadors of goodwill to the Blind of another land, and we went also to make an enquiry as to how our particular problem is dealt with abroad, and how our methods of dealing with it look when reflected in the minds of others. It is a peculiar pleasure to us all that so soon after our return we have been able to impart such information as we have gained to this representative parliament of the English Blind world.

Mr. F. R. LOVETT (Ministry of Health), in concluding the discussion, said:—

There are just a few threads that I should like to gather up after the most informing and interesting talks that we have had from our colleagues this afternoon.

One matter has not been touched upon this afternoon, although implied in Captain Fraser's speech, namely, that from the point of view of the blind, there is no United States at all. The Federal Government has practically nothing to do with the blind. There are forty-eight different governments dealing with the blind in forty-eight different ways—Pennsylvania will deal with them in one way, Massachusetts in another, New York in yet another, and California in a totally different way. Many States are doing practically nothing apart from Education. Where the States are doing the work well, they are doing it within limits as well as we do it in England, but I do not think that they cover the whole ground as completely. The most interesting question to my mind when I went to America was to see whether what we hear in England is really true—that if we had more money we could do the work much better. America is a country whose wealth is proverbial, where there are immense funds available for charitable effort, and I wanted to see whether this outpouring of money meant a better service for the blind. I should like to describe what the Perkins Institution near Boston is like. This Institution was re-built fifteen or seventeen years ago at a cost of one million dollars. Mr. Allen, the distinguished Director of the School, said, "I have some 300 children here, and the last thing I want to do is to institutionalise them. What I want is a series of homes with about twenty children per home, each with two or three teachers, living in a home atmosphere, where they can get to know each other, and live in a small community in the midst of a big one." There is a fine big tower and central building in this Institution, and on either side of the central building, for about one-third of a

mile, the buildings are laid out very much on the plan of the Vicar's Close at Wells, with a row of cottages running down either side. As you went into each cottage, you found it to be a home of twenty children, all of whom, with their teachers, knew each other intimately, and lived in the home, so far as the domestic side of their life was concerned, entirely to themselves. That arrangement, of course, costs two or three times as much as an ordinary institutional arrangement, planned on economic lines, with all the children living together would cost, and American wealth made it possible.

When I went to Princeton University they told me that English scientists who had visited American universities had said that in matters respecting equipment and apparatus things could be done better in America than anywhere else in the world, and that, in consequence, America was strong in experimental research. From this point of view money certainly does make a difference. But while that is true, we all felt that the Americans had not solved the problems of the blind any better than we have, nor have they gone any further than we have. Money by itself does not solve these social problems, although it may enable us to try experiments and to do things in different ways.

The next thing I want to say is that, owing to Miss Garaway's absence, we have heard very little this afternoon about schools. We have much to learn educationally from the Americans, more possibly than in any other part of the problem of the blind, and to complete our picture of American work for the blind you will need to study Miss Garaway's paper.

As far as vocational training goes, there is vocational training of a kind in America in the workshops, but in the schools the training in handicrafts is carried out from the point of view of teaching the child and bringing out the child's mental ability. In the American workshops there are training departments which aim at training for a specific job, but they do not, as we do in our best workshops here, train a man to become a journeyman who knows his trade altogether. The Americans are behind us so far as the training of tradesmen is concerned.

Then I must add a word about their extreme energy and interest in research. We have begun this in England during the last few years, but it was begun a good deal earlier in the United States, and much work has been done in applying mechanical tests for intelligence, in various kinds of educational experiments, etc. They have also to some extent investigated vocational matters like osteopathy, openings for the blind in the insurance world, dictaphone operation, and "stand concessions." They have done more of that kind of work than we have.

There was a remark at a luncheon at Pittsburgh which indicates the difference between the system in many (but not all) of the American States and ours. I said that, until there was a complete register of all the blind in the country, the extent of the problem remained unknown, and many opportunities for helping the blind were missed. There are a few States in America which have reasonably complete registers, but there are vast areas where nothing like a complete

register is available. Therefore I am sure that there are large numbers of the blind who are not receiving any attention at all. Good registration is the basis of good service for the blind, and I am hoping that the American Foundation for the Blind will make effective registration one of the planks of its immediate programme.

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